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BOOK REVIEWS

JURIDICAL REFORM, by John D. Works. (New York: The Neale Publishing Co., 1919, pp. 199.)

As a contribution of itself to the corpus juris, this carefully executed work cannot have, nor does its author claim for it, any real value. It is simply a very thorough, but fearless and wholesome criticism, from an impersonal and helpful point of view, not so much of the judicial machinery, as of its method of operation. In the words of the author: "This little book is intended, not only to point out some of the changes in the laws of pleading, practice, and procedure, necessary to mitigate present conditions resulting in interminable delays and enormous expense in maintaining the courts and the administration of justice, but also to show that a large part of the delays, and consequent unnecessary expense of litigation, is not brought about by defective laws alone, but by the dilatory and faulty administration of the laws we have."

No step in the trial of a case, from the writ to the written opinion of the court of last resort, escapes Mr. Works' sincere criticism. In no uncertain manner does he make known his views as to the inefficiency, slothfulness and procrastinating proclivities of the personnel of bench and bar from the meanest magistrate's court to the supreme court of the nation. He takes as his key-note the "unnecessary delay and expense in the administration of justice," and then proceeds to prove to his own satisfaction at least, that everything done by the judge, jury and attorney renders contribution to both.

However, differing from the ordinary reformer, Mr. Works does offer something in place of that which he wants to destroy. His diction alone merits for him the belief that he is entirely sincere in his conviction that the new and untried substitutes offered embody the long-hoped-for panacea of juridical ills. He advocates a readjustment of the judiciary, a new mode of pleading, the curtailment of cross-examination, written opinions and many other reformatory methods, together with the abolition of briefs and demurrers. He strongly favors the adoption of the principles as embodied in the English Judicature Acts, and this seems eminently sound, as they have been tried and found good.

On the whole, the little book is well worth reading, and if the bench and bar heed its words of sound criticism, the author in his next edition, would find his worthy efforts repaid by having his field of labor much reduced.

W. P. HAZLEGROVE.